our fourfooted friends

Animal Rescue League of Boston • Winter 1990

Animal Rescue League of Boston

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Our Fourfooted Friends

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American Humane Association
Denver, Colorado

World Society for the Protection of Animals
Boston, MA (Regional Office)

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COVER:

"Hosanna" is ready to greet the holidays at his home in a convent in Orleans on Cape Cod, where he was photographed by Sister Monica Elmer.

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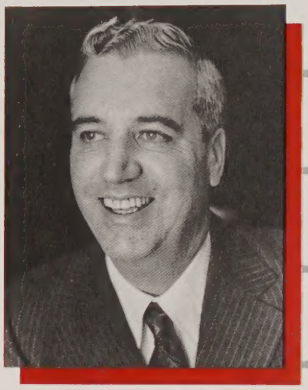


Arthur G. Slade, *President*

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A Call to Action

The League is a founding member of the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) and we endeavor to assist their efforts from time to time concerning important issues and urgent international matters.

One such issue is an "Action Alert" we have just received from WSPA's Boston office.

In an operation shrouded in secrecy, a French dolphinarium is attempting to capture a number of Mediterranean monk seals — one of the most endangered species in the world — purportedly for breeding purposes. The seals are being hunted at an undisclosed location near Morocco, and WSPA has learned that, in return for permission to take the seals, the Antibes Marineland has agreed to assist the Moroccan government in establishing a commercial dolphinarium in that country.

Fewer than 500 Mediterranean monk seals are known to survive, and the Marineland intends to take five to seven animals from a group of 25 in the south of Morocco. This appears to be a serious violation of the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and of the Bern Convention, which explicitly prohibit the deliberate capture or killing of monk seals. Yet a permit to take the seals has been granted by the French Ministry of Environment, on the grounds that the Antibes Marineland intends to breed the seals in captivity. There is overwhelming evidence that captive monk seals have never been bred successfully. Of 34 monk seals captured for aquariums since 1957, most have survived only a few months.

The Antibes Marineland has provided no scientific evidence of a genuine breeding plan; rather, the dolphinarium's public statements seem calculated to provide cover for a purely commercial and illicit enterprise.

WSPA is working with a number of groups, including the Bellerive Foundation and the World Conservation Union, to prevent this capture. WSPA members and member societies like the League are encouraged to protest the capture of monk seals to the following individuals:

Othame Demnati, Minister of Agriculture, Quartier Administratif, Rabat, Morocco; Tel: (7) 60993

Brice Lalonde, Ministre de l'Environnement, 45 Avenue Georges Mandel, 75016 Paris, France; FAX: 1-45-49-78-32

Willem Wijnstekers, Commission of the European Communities, Directorate-General for the Environment, B1049 Brussels, Belgium; Tel: 02-235-6773

Jacques Berney, Deputy Director General, CITES, Rue de Maupas 6, Case Postale 87, 1000 Lausanne 9, Switzerland; Tel: 021-20-00-81

Please send copies of letters to WSPA, P.O. Box 190, Boston, MA 02130

Macaws, parrots and other exotic birds have high mortality rates in captivity.

Photo by Frank P. Bruno of East Boston.

THE CALL OF THE WILD

Exotic Pets Create Extensive Problems

A few months ago League agents, local police and animal control officers were called to a condominium in Quincy where a petrified woman had discovered a large boa constrictor in her apartment. The snake turned out to be the escaped pet of a neighbor who had been keeping it in a building where no pets were allowed, even those of a less frightening variety. The League had to remove the snake and find a placement for it. If the League had not been on hand, the police would have had to kill the animal.

Not long afterwards, a South Boston resident brought a two-and-a-half-foot Savannah monitor lizard to the League. The lizard was sick, and had also become very nasty and begun to bite. The owner could not afford exotic veterinary treatment, or a proper tank to house the lizard, and also did not realize that it was illegal to keep a Savannah monitor in Massachusetts. The League transported the lizard to a wildlife center and reported the incident to the state.

In just the first nine months of 1990, League shelters have received twelve ferrets, eight boa constrictors, three chinchillas, six pythons, thirteen turtles, three lizards, and thirty exotic birds. Many of these were illegal pets; others were legal to keep, but undesirable as pets for a number of very sound reasons.

People purchase exotic pets in an effort to be unique or different, or because the animal appeals to them at the time, but they are most often unaware of the animal's special care needs, and unintentionally wind up mistreating them. When the novelty wears off, the exotic pet is often simply turned loose, or given up to a humane society which will have great difficulty finding it a new home. Aside from the ethical considerations of trying to raise wild creatures in a domestic setting, there are additional practical problems that often lead to disaster. Many of these animals represent a threat to humans — either they bite, or they carry diseases such as rabies, and vaccines do not exist for their species. If they get sick, they usually require specialized veterinary care by an exotic wildlife expert.

Though certain snakes and lizards are legal to own, many people adopt them without realizing that they require a diet of live mice. "We see people giving up snakes and

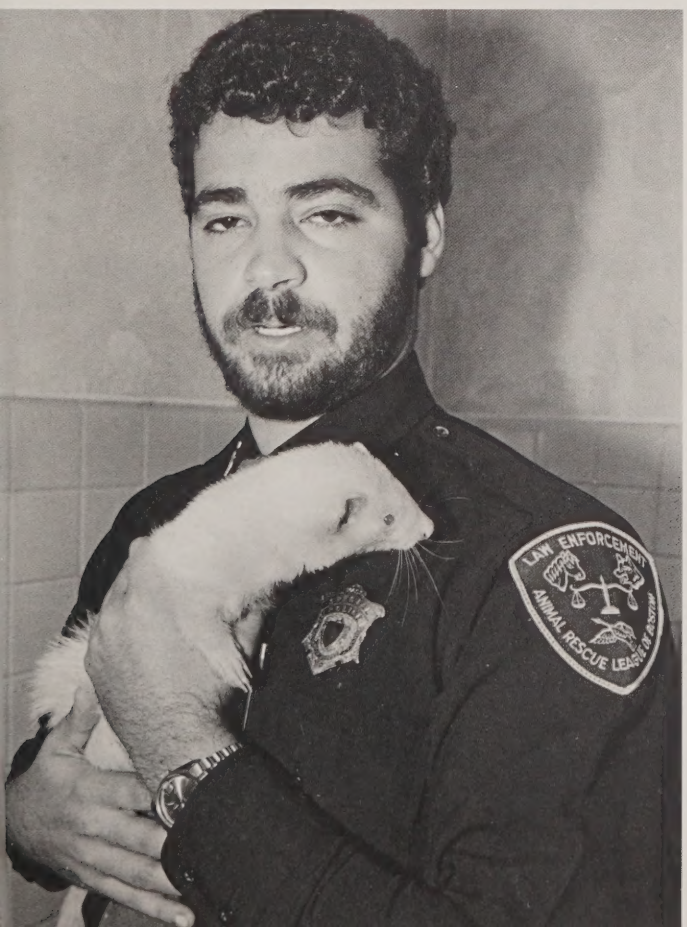
lizards because they are understandably squeamish about feeding them,'' notes League law enforcement coordinator Alan B. Borgal.

Many of these animals have been taken illegally from their natural habitats by unscrupulous dealers catering to a public demand. By creating a market for these animals, people are inadvertently helping to deplete natural populations. Alan Borgal observes that ''during my ten years of inspecting pet shops, it is not unusual for the owners to report that 40% of the reptiles in any given shipment are dead on arrival, or very sick. This means that for every one that is adopted, another one has been killed. Also, pet shops trust that dealers will bring them only legal animals. Frequently, the shop owners themselves are unaware of local regulations, or unable to identify illegal species. It is very difficult, for example, to distinguish between legal versus illegal species of snakes or lizards.''

This difficulty almost led to disaster recently in New York when about fifty supposedly harmless snakes sold to a chain of pet stores turned out to be poisonous. Labeled as harmless garter snakes, they were actually venomous Asian water snakes known as Redneck Keelbacks whose bites can be fatal if not treated. After the health department in New York issued a public warning, most of the snakes were removed from pet stores, but the A.S.P.C.A. had to pick up some of them from pet owners who called for help.

A Boston area pet shop owner was recently shocked to learn from League agents that the Solomon Island ground skinks (a type of lizard) that he was selling were illegal in Massachusetts. Though friendly and docile, and allowed as pets in some parts of the country, ground skinks are on the illegal list here because their population in the Solomon Islands is being depleted due to the pet trade.

League agent Mark Williamson holds an albino ferret picked up as a stray in the streets of Boston.



Pot-bellied pigs are cute, but are outlawed in many city apartments.

Locally, there has been an increase in the number of ferrets received at the League. Although it is illegal to keep ferrets in Massachusetts unless one has a permit which is granted only for scientific or educational purposes, ferrets are allowed as pets in some neighboring states. As a result, people who have adopted ferrets elsewhere and grown attached to them, find out they are illegal after moving here and must give them up. Because of the strict permit conditions, it is very hard for the League to find suitable placements for ferrets. Members of the weasel family, ferrets are cute and affectionate, but are not recommended as pets because they can be a danger to children (there are numerous reports of young children being bitten), and because of the ferret's unknown history, there is always a risk of rabies.

Another unusual but increasingly popular pet is the Vietnamese pot-bellied pig, a miniature breed that grows to an adult weight of 60 to 110 pounds. Although they are intelligent and can be house-broken and leash trained, these animals have special dietary requirements, and are subject to U.S.D.A. regulations for interstate transport. Though not banned by state regulation, they are currently illegal to keep as pets in certain cities and towns, including Boston.

The Massachusetts Division of Fish and Wildlife has an extensive listing of exotic pets that are legal, those that are not legal, and those that are allowed only with a special permit granted under strict conditions. Boa constrictors and pythons are legal as pets, for example, but only when they are under nine and eight feet long, respectively. What happens when they grow? Too often, they are turned over to the League which must find a placement for them with a local herpitologist or wildlife center. Anyone contemplating the adoption of an unusual pet should check first with the appropriate state or city agency to determine legal regulations.

The League urges those considering such a step to think twice — and then think again! Even if the exotic pet is legal, are you really prepared to provide the special housing conditions, or diet, it will need as it grows? The specialized veterinary care it will need if it gets sick? Are you ready to risk injury from bites, scratches, or transmittable diseases? Finally, wouldn't it make more sense to offer a home to one of the thousands of dogs, cats and other domestic pets who so desperately need one?

Dr. Frank J. Sullivan (right) was the League's first veterinarian, serving for 23 years.

A HISTORY OF HEALING

By Edward A. Leonard, D.V.M.

The arts of healing were first applied to animals by the Egyptians, Greeks and ancient Romans, but it wasn't until the 18th century that the science of veterinary medicine was formally established as a professional course of study. The world's oldest existing school of veterinary medicine, the National Veterinary School of France, was founded in 1762 at Lyon, France. This was the home of Louis Pasteur's studies on anthrax in sheep, and rabies in dogs. In North America, the oldest existing school of veterinary medicine is the Ontario Veterinary College, established in 1862. The oldest existing school of veterinary medicine in the United States was established in 1879 at Iowa State University.

Health care for animals was a goal as fundamental as providing shelter and food to those who pioneered the humane movement in the United States in the late 19th century. The League owes its existence to the efforts of Anna Harris Smith who, appalled at the condition of sick and starving animals on the streets of Boston, wrote a letter in 1899 to the *Boston Evening Transcript*, urging the establishment of an Animal Rescue League in the heart of the city. In March of 1899, 110 founding members incorporated the organization with the goal of "the establishment of one or more refuges for . . . the rescue and relief of suffering or homeless animals."

On April 15 of that year the League moved into its first building and engaged an agent to collect animals. With work increasing daily, a visiting veterinarian was soon needed, and a free clinic for animals was operated in those early years. References to veterinary care appear frequently in the early issues of *Our Fourfooted Friends*, published by the League since 1902.

The *Boston Herald* carried the following testimony in 1913:

"It is always good news to hear of increasing care of animals, and the public will be glad to know that the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is going to start a free clinic where horses, dogs, cats and birds needing care will receive treatment. But in commending the new, let us not forget to give credit to what has already been done.

"The Animal Rescue League, 51 Carver Street, Boston, has been carrying on a free clinic for animals for at least ten years, during which time we learn that certainly over 40,000 animals, horses, dogs, cats and birds have been treated free of charge. This has been so quietly done that the general public may not know about it. Yet for all these years the League veterinarian, Dr. Frank J. Sullivan, whose knowledge and skill with horses and smaller animals is well known by many men and women who are interested in animals, has been doing this work.

"One of the houses where the League work goes on is called the infirmary, and in this house is a large square room which is the doctor's office. This room is fitted up with telephone and medicine closet, and here the writer has seen men and women, and children, some coming in carriages and automobiles, but most of them poorly clothed, barefooted children among them, bringing tenderly a dog or cat, or little kitten, needing the doctor's advice.

"In the back of the dog home, is a shed where there are two comfortable emergency stalls for horses. Not a week or hardly a day goes by that the doctor is not called upon to do something for these horses of poor men who cannot pay for advice or help. Literally and without exaggeration, the doctor during the last eight years treated several thousand horses, and each year a number of these horses, with sprained legs or shoulders, lame and sore feet, ulcers, cases of blood poisoning, have been sent out to the Animal Rescue League home of rest for horses at Pine Ridge, Dedham, and kept until in good condition.

"This work has never been advertised; no appeal has been made for funds with which to carry on the clinic of the Animal Rescue League; yet the work was begun before the hospitals were started in Philadelphia or New York, and has gone on year after year — a real hospital work, though not known and advertised as such.

"The writer of this article has been one of the many who have benefitted many times during the last ten years by the free clinic at the Animal Rescue League, and wishes to give this testimony that a valuable and generous hospital work has been open for years, and is still open to all who need it. Doubtless there are hundreds of men and women who would gladly give their testimony to the same effect."

Thomas F. Russell
Boston, July 26, 1913

The League recorded in 1914: "Since the first year of our work, we have had the valuable services of Dr. Frank J. Sullivan, who has had an office with us, giving his advice and help for the League animals, and also free advice and treatment for horses, dogs, cats and birds belonging to men and women not able to pay for such services . . . it is safe to say that he averages more than 5,000 free patients in a year, since not a day goes by without from 15 to 20 calls being made upon him at his office in the League infirmary."

In 1922, the League remodeled its premises, providing enlarged quarters for the veterinarian and clinic. By 1923, the increasing popularity of the clinic "demanded an assistant for the greatly over-worked veterinarian." Frank J. Sullivan, M.D.V., was the League's veterinarian for 23 years. In 1925, Dr. Wesley A. Young, former chief veterinarian at Iowa State College, assumed charge of the clinic. He wrote frequently in *Our Fourfooted Friends,* where he began a feature called the "Question Box." In one of his articles he wrote:

"I am receiving quite a large number of female cats and dogs that have been in labor for three or four days without being able to deliver their young. Let us encourage people to treat females with some respect and feeling — when a female has been in labor for twelve hours without delivery, it is imperative that she be helped ... it is an unpardonable sin to let a mother labor and suffer for more than twelve hours without aid."

In 1927, Dr. Fred G. Harbaugh came from Iowa State College for the summer months to help Dr. Young. Enlarging the accommodations, the League added a bathtub for the dogs, a clipping machine, and twelve large cages for dogs or cats that stayed overnight.

Then came the Great Depression in the 1930s when "calls upon the free clinic showed a sharp increase as more owners of stricken pets sought to conserve their resources wherever possible." During this time, the League obtained an ether anesthesia apparatus and, in 1932, Dr. Young proudly announced the donation of funds for an X-ray and fluoroscope. They made almost daily use of the new equipment to diagnose and treat injuries and illness. Dr. Young noted that the patient load had almost doubled since his first year, at which time the clinic "was almost void of equipment." As time went on, they could provide clinical service that compared favorably with the clinical services available to humans. They added an electric sterilizer for instruments, a microscope, a centrifuge, special instruments, anesthetics, a gas machine, and an electric surgical unit. Each new piece of equipment enabled them to offer better relief to sick and injured animals.

For the information of concerned readers, Dr. Young wrote in 1935 about castrating male animals and spaying females. "These two operations are performed in our clinic for the purpose of birth control, as the League feels it a part of its duty to take steps to avoid unnecessary propagation of animals."

In 1936, after 10 years with the League, Dr. Young was succeeded as chief veterinarian by Dr. Herbert M. Tabbut, who had spent a summer at the League clinic before graduating from Iowa State College as a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, and another summer as a new graduate before joining the veterinary faculty at Iowa State.

By 1940, the clinic had three veterinarians. The League stressed that "the clinic is operated for the benefit of the owner of an animal who is financially unable to pay a veterinary fee. . . . Initial treatment is freely given whenever requested, but in those instances where the owner is able to pay for treatment, the patient is referred to a responsible local practitioner."

Little has changed in the last 50 years, other than an increase in the number of patients served and the level of sophistication of medical treatment. Charges for medication came in the 1950s, and charges for professional services began in the 1970s. Today, we have three full-time and two part-time veterinarians. Anesthesia has gone from ether to methoxyflurane to halothane to isoflurane. The fluoroscope has gone, but the X-ray machine remains. The sterilizer, microscope and centrifuge continue in daily use.

Veterinary students still spend summers with us, as they have since Dr. Young's and, I'm sure, Dr. Sullivan's days ninety years ago. In the last four years, we have begun offering a one- or two-week externship program for students

(Continued on next page)

THE GIFT OF LOVE

Wouldn't it be a great idea to surprise your niece or nephew, or maybe your widowed aunt, with a kitten or puppy under the tree on Christmas morning?

"Absolutely not!" is the unanimous advice of animal welfare professionals who see these "surprise gifts" being given up to shelters each year after the holidays because they failed to adjust to their new surroundings, or because they were unwanted in the first place.

To prevent the disasters that occur when this kind of misguided generosity backfires, the League is now offering a pet adoption gift certificate that allows the gift recipient to pick out the pet of their choice any time during the year — a companion that won't be too big or too small, or too rambunctious, and will never have to be exchanged after the holidays are over.

The love of a pet is a gift that will bring enjoyment for many years to come for most people, but not everyone has the time or the energy to make the commitment that is necessary for responsible pet ownership. Be very certain that the special person on your list is willing and able to care for a pet.

Even if you're absolutely sure that a pet is wanted, the holiday season is a very stressful time to introduce a young animal to new surroundings. The League recommends that people adopting pets at this time of year plan to bring the animal home either before or after the holidays, so that it can have a few days of peace and quiet to get used to its new family and routine.

Pet adoption gift certificates are available for all types of animals — hamsters, gerbils, rabbits, puppies, kittens, or older dogs and cats. Adoption fees vary according to the type of animal, and include the cost of spaying or neutering in the case of dogs and cats. Certificates can be ordered by telephone by calling (617) 426-9170, and charged to your credit card.

Photo of "Tippy Cat" by Sharon Herbert of Canton.

Pets can add joy to the holidays, if they are allowed to settle in ahead of time.

A HISTORY OF HEALING *(Cont.)*

at Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine. Here are some comments from future veterinarians who have participated in the program:

"I chose this elective in order to . . . improve my skill in an atmosphere which would allow me to feel my work was of some benefit to the animals."

"My week here unexpectedly gave reality to the figures of pet overpopulation and will help me to remember to encourage owners to spay and neuter."

"I feel 100% better about my ability, and also hope I helped out a bit."

"I also have gained first-hand knowledge of an animal shelter's 'inner workings' which I hope to use for client and public education."

Small patients wait for medical attention in the League's reception room, circa 19

A THANK-YOU FROM BELLA

Ed. Note: When the League was seeking a home for a goat that had been taken into custody after it was mistreated by its previous owner, Sandy Slauenwhite of Kingston generously opened her home and heart to the abused animal. Mrs. Slauenwhite was kind enough to send along the following warm-hearted words and pictures to share with our readers.

My dear friends,

I wanted to let you know how I am doing in my new home.

Everyone here is nice to me except Gabriel, the donkey. He's a bully! Sandy tried putting us a few times together, but he kept chasing me. I've made friends with Earl the horse and Sam and Tom, the barn cats.

I will never be able to thank you enough for saving me. I will always remember the day you found me, and made me well again . . . You, dear friends, were the ones who first cared about me. So I thank you all, from the bottom of my heart, and from all the other abused friends you've taken the time to rescue.

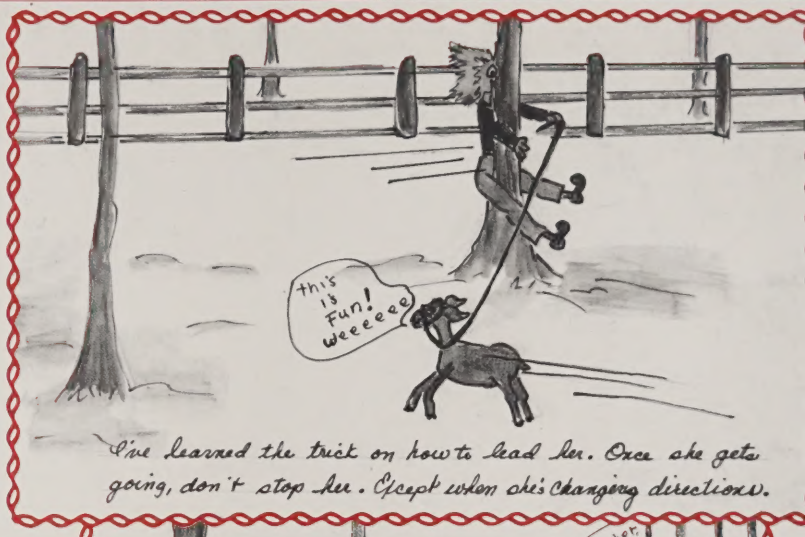
All my love,
Bella

Mrs. Slauenwhite adds:

To watch her with all my grandchildren is priceless. They range in age from 9 years to 7 months, and her response to them is pure sweetness, as if she really understands their ways. . . . I never would have believed owning a goat would bring so much joy into one's life. Her personality has highlighted our barn, and brought spice into it!

She gets along with the other animals except the donkey — not her fault, but his! She wins the heart of everyone who meets her. Here are a few drawings (and a poem) to show the humor she has brought into our home.

DAY 1
WELCOME HOME BELLA
I HATE IT when she makes us do this!
what is she gonna get next?
maybe a cat mouse
HAPPY Birthday!
did some one say mouse?
today is the first day of her new life.


this is Fun! weeeeee
I've learned the trick on how to lead her. Once she gets going, don't stop her. Except when she's changing directions.

THANK YOU!

I was told about a goat, that was saved by the A.R.L.
It was underfed, walked on its knees; they called her Jezebel.

So touched by this story, I couldn't help but try
To see if I could have her, then wait for their reply.

The day was finally here, to meet my new adopted friend,
There she stood, floppy ears, and knobby knees to bend.

I giggled with excitement, as she displayed her grace,
And my heart exploded in me, when she let me kiss her face.

Our days have been adventurous, for both of us you see,
I never had a Jezebel, and she never had a me!

We've sat and had quiet talks, mostly about her past;
I sang her "Happy Birthday," for she has found her home at last.

The innocence of nature is knit in her tiny frame;
Jezebel just doesn't fit her, so I have changed her name.

Though she's been abused, like so many other little friends,
A part within their heart is saved, that love can always mend.

Our friendship is life-long and I hope someday I'll see,
She's part of heaven's treasures that my Lord's prepared for me.

All of His creations are joy for us to share,
So thank you for the diamond you've entrusted to my care.

TAKING THEIR WORK HOME

By Terrie Bierig-Neyland

Most people look forward to the end of the work day because it signals the beginning of their evening away from the pressures of their job, a time to relax and pursue leisure activities. Employees at the Animal Rescue League of Boston look forward to leaving work and going home to their own personal job-related responsibilities, their pets. A visitor to the League would be hard-pressed to find an employee who has not adopted a pet from one of the shelters; in fact, many employees are multiple ''League pet'' owners. It is one of the most pleasurable job hazards a pet lover could ask for.

Animal Rescue League employees find themselves adopting the ''projects'' in the shelter. These are the abandoned kittens and puppies that require hand feeding, the pet whose badly injured limb could not be saved so amputation was required, the eight- or nine-year-old pet that no one ever comes to the shelter to adopt, and the abused animals that will always need large amounts of patience and understanding. Employees also adopt healthy and whole pets for the same reasons the public adopts them, because they add a dimension of love and companionship to people's lives that they cannot get any other way.

The day that ''Helen'' stumbled into Jim Stasio's life is one that he will never forget. Jim is the manager of the League's Salem branch, and before he met Helen he had already adopted ''Smokey'' the cat and ''Pal'' the dog, in addition to being the father of three active and growing children. Helen's story began approximately five months ago when a Lynn resident reported that a stray kitten was in her backyard and was acting abnormally. The Lynn animal control officer arrived on the scene to find a small, short-haired, orange kitten acting disoriented and bumping head-on into objects in its path. The animal control officer scooped up the kitten and transported it to the League's Salem branch. At Salem the kitten was evaluated by a veterinarian and it was determined that the kitten was actually blind, probably due to a birth defect that prevented its eyes from developing properly. It was never determined how the kitten found its way into the Lynn resident's backyard, and no one ever telephoned the Salem branch to claim her. The way was clear for the kitten to steal Jim's heart and work her way directly into his home and family. The Stasio family welcomed the challenge of adopting a blind kitten and, from the moment she arrived and was christened ''Helen,'' they set about adjusting to her special needs.

Today Helen is an active, healthy, nine-month-old kitten who has a best friend and constant companion in Jim's four-year-old daughter Jessica.

Of all the individuals that comprise Cape Cod shelter manager Lynda Brogden's animal family, ''Peepers'' the pigeon is the most unique. Peepers' story began on September 2, 1987 when he and another nest mate were discovered by workers at a local construction site and brought to the Cape Cod branch. The nest mate died almost immediately after the rescue but Peepers submitted to and thrived on Lynda's round-the-clock nursing. Peepers bonded solidly to Lynda and it became a common sight for visitors to the shelter to see this woman and her pigeon companion patrolling the grounds and greeting guests.

One day last year Lynda emerged from the shelter and was not greeted by the familiar flutter of feathered wings about her head and the usual ''cooing'' hello from Peepers. An immediate and thorough search of the property revealed not a trace of him; that was when Lynda knew that Peepers was lost. It is not usually cause for alarm when a pigeon flies away from an area it has been accustomed to; however, Peepers was not just any pigeon. He was hand-raised and dependent on Lynda for shelter and food. She felt sure he would not be able to survive on his own and even more sure that he would appear at a nearby house in search of his home.

Lynda counsels people every day who have lost pets, explaining what steps to follow in retrieving them. She

League employees shown with pets adopted from the ARL of Boston are (l to r): Alan Borgal with box turtles ''Chris and Ray''; Peggy Turchette with ''Abby''; Josie Wixon with ''Pa''; Barbara Ashe with ''Tiffy''; Judy Cooper with ''Teddy''; Natalie Mair with ''Iggy and BLT''; Mark Williamson with ''Gunther''; Terrie Bierig-Neyland with

decided to take her own advice and start a methodical search for Peepers. She took out an advertisement in the local newspaper, called the local police departments, and informed her neighbors. Her efforts paid off when a local resident mentioned to a friend that there was a strange pigeon hanging around her house and trying to get inside. The friend she spoke to happened to have heard about Lynda's "lost and found" report to the police and called the Cape Cod shelter.

Because Lynda refused to give up on Peepers and followed the proper procedures for finding a lost pet, he is home safe and sound today. Peepers has never wandered away again and he keeps an especially close eye on Lynda as if it was she that became lost and not him. When she is out of doors he perches on her head or flies from object to object in the same path she is walking. He follows her indoors and out and also acts as a "protection pigeon" as Lynda puts it, swooping down at people that get too close to her, or even karate chopping them with his wing. If all that fails to deter the person, Peepers has been known to peck feet in order to get his point across. It is safe to assume that as long as Peepers is on patrol Lynda is in safe "wings."

In February of 1989, Robert Walsh, who manages the Dedham branch of the League, discovered a badly injured cat on the pet cemetery property. Although he did not yet know it, this cat was destined to be the first animal addition to his new home. The cat, a young, orange tabby, neutered male, was examined and found to have two broken hind legs and radial nerve paralysis. Initially, it seemed that the staff would not be able to save this gravely injured cat who purred and whined to be patted despite the excrutiating pain it seemed to be in. But Gimpy, as he came to be known, proved to be an exceptional cat who was determined to beat the odds stacked against him. Because he was so special, it was decided that the surgery required to repair his damaged legs would be performed. Robert and another staff person voluntarily took on the responsibility of giving Gimpy his daily physical therapy which involved exercising and bending his stiff legs. Robert performed the therapy on Gimpy religiously for six weeks and he and the staff were pleased to see one of the legs respond beautifully; however, the nerve damaged leg was permanently disabled. Through all the therapy sessions and his painful recovery, Gimpy never seemed to stop purring and would even drag himself to the front of his cage to try and coax a pat from a passerby.

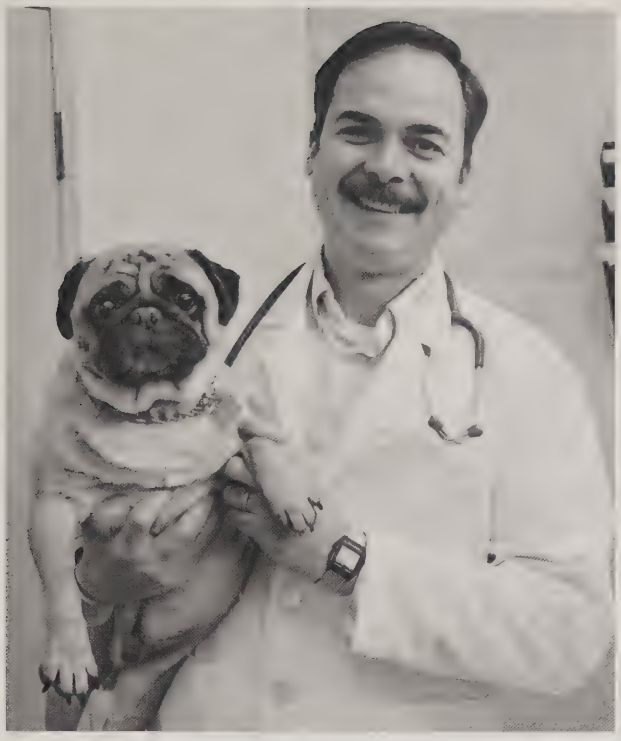
Paula Ouimette of Salem branch with "Nemo" the cat, and "Barnaby," the parrot.

When the time came for Gimpy to be placed for adoption, the shelter staff decided it was time for Robert to have a pet and Gimpy seemed to be just the cat for the job. Robert did not exactly need to be convinced as he had grown very fond of the cat during the many hours he nursed Gimpy. Robert was recently married and his wife, also an animal lover, adopted a second League cat that has become fast friends with Gimpy.

There are more pet adoption stories like these than can possibly be included in one article. They are the success stories about the pets that were rescued by caring Animal Rescue League personnel. League employees adopt these pets because they love animals, but there is another more complex reason. The nature of the animal welfare field is such that the people working in it are constantly brought in contact with the suffering endured by animals in society. Every day these people see animals that have been abused, struck by cars, starved, deprived of necessary medical attention, and given up at the shelter for reasons that are beyond comprehension. Every work day is a lesson in "we cannot save them all," but we still try. Some of the animals we can save are the pets we adopt ourselves. When we leave the shelter at the end of the day we know we are going home to pets that will never be abused or starved or given away. We are going home to the pets we truly have rescued.

"Stewart"; Paula Ouimette with "Shezar"; Lisa Johnson with "Kaila Jean"; Jim Stasio with "Helen"; Janice Bosworth with "Dunkin"; Lori Crockwell with "Sabby"; Robert Kennedy with "Rudie"; Alan Thomas with "Kazaka"; Sharon Copp-Hiltz with "Murphy"; and Rommel Jones with "Buster."

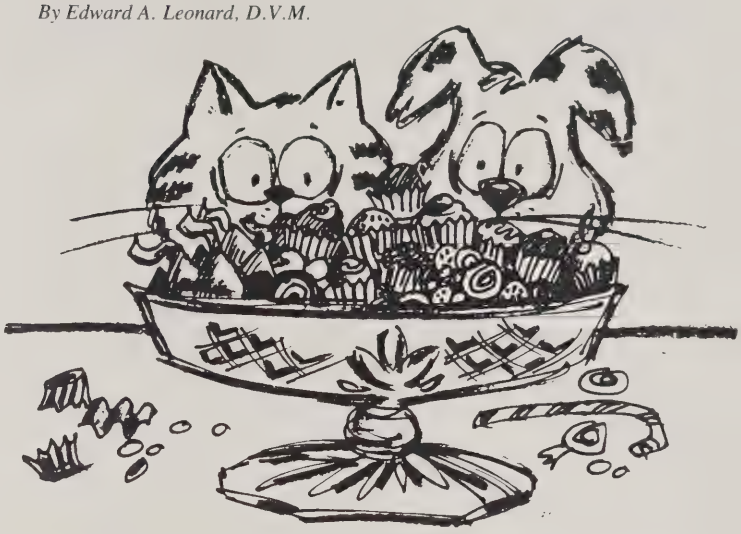
ANNUAL FAIR '90



A Veterinary Update

Toxic Taste Sites

By Edward A. Leonard, D.V.M.



Hidden away in the average household throughout the year are a host of chemicals, medications and other substances that can be toxic to small animals. In the winter, however, especially during the holiday season, the danger is increased with the introduction into the home of potentially dangerous decorations, holiday plants and even edible treats like chocolate that are delicious but can be deadly if consumed in quantity.

Unlike household cleansers and harsh chemicals, these items are likely to be on display in the home, easily accessible to curious or hungry pets. Tragic accidents can be prevented by learning which substances are poisonous, understanding the conditions under which poisoning is likely to occur, and then taking positive steps to prevent disaster.

Poisonous Plants

Many holiday plants are potentially harmful if ingested. While a single bite of any plant will rarely be lethal, there are exceptions, such as the oleander, castor beans, and precatory beans (also called rosary pea). Plant poisoning of adult dogs and cats is rare, but puppies and kittens love chewing on new and inviting substances, so it is particularly important to "pet-proof" the surroundings of young animals by placing dangerous plants out of reach. Hazardous holiday plants include mistletoe, poinsettia (the sap is an irritant that can cause conjunctivitis), amaryllis bulbs, and Christmas cactus.

Chocolate and Caffeine

An open box of chocolates on a low coffee table is almost impossible for a dog to resist, and a number of dogs have died after consuming excessive amounts of chocolate. The lethal dose is considered to be between ⅔ and 1½ oz. of chocolate per kilogram of body weight, but one canine death has been reported after ingestion of approximately half that amount. While accidental consumption of caffeine has not been known to cause the death of an animal, it can cause vomiting and lead to cardiac arrythmias and seizures.

Antifreeze

Automotive antifreeze is a highly poisonous substance with a sweet taste that is very appetizing to pets. Any antifreeze that is spilled in a garage or driveway should be cleaned up immediately.

Treatment

If you suspect that your pet has swallowed poison, call your veterinarian immediately. Depending on the substance ingested, your veterinarian may instruct you to administer first aid by giving your pet an emetic such as a mixture of salt and water, or hydrogen peroxide. Never try to treat the animal on your own. In some cases, for example when an animal has swallowed a corrosive substance such as a strong acid, alkali or kerosene, inducing vomiting will do more harm than good. If at all possible, bring a sample (or the container) of the suspected poison along with you when you take your pet to the veterinary hospital. This will enable your veterinarian to determine the proper antidote without delay, thus giving your pet the best possible chance for survival and recovery.

HOTLINE HELP
Clip and save these numbers:
Massachusetts Poison Control Center — (617) 232-2120
National Poison Control (Illinois) — (217) 333-3611

NEWSFRONT

ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF BOSTON

BKA WEEK TO FEATURE BLESSING OF PETS AND PET SHOW

A Blessing of the Pets, followed by Pet Appreciation Day on Boston Common will kick off Be Kind to Animals Week festivities at the League on Sunday, May 5, 1991. The week's activities, which will include school tours of shelters and educational and adoption exhibits around the state, will climax on Saturday, May 11, with an Open House celebration at the League's Boston headquarters. Watch for more details in the next issue!

NEW RABIES VACCINE FOR WILD RACCOONS

The Wistar Institute in Philadelphia has developed a new method of vaccinating wild raccoons against rabies, according to a report in *Wildlife Health News*. The method involves spreading baits containing a vaccine that stimulates the raccoon's immune system to fight rabies. The vaccine bait system of rabies control has been used effectively in Switzerland and West Germany on foxes, according to the article.

A WHALE OF A VICTORY

Delegates to the International Whaling Commission's annual meeting held this year in the Netherlands voted to maintain the moratorium on commercial whaling indefinitely; approved a proposal requesting Japan to reassess its slaughter of Dall's porpoises; and adopted the United Nations resolution which calls for an end to all drift-net fishing by 1992. These votes were the culmination of ten years of efforts by animal protection organizations to have the plight of the small cetaceans (dolphins and porpoises) recognized by the International Whaling Commission, according to Neil Wells, South Pacific regional director of the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) and WSPA's representative at the meeting.

Wells cautions that next year's meeting in Iceland will be crucial. "Without a doubt, the scientific committee will eventually report that certain whale stocks are abundant and there will be pressure for the resumption of commercial whaling. While the moratorium can, for the moment, be sustained on scientific grounds, the World Society and other animal protection organizations will need to increase efforts to oppose whaling on ethical and cruelty grounds," he states.

A HOLIDAY BENEFIT "ESPECIALLY FOR PETS"

For the second year in a row, "Especially for Pets," a department store for pets located at 1223 Chestnut St. in Newton, is inviting area residents to bring their pets into the store to have their holiday photos taken with "Santa Paws" for the benefit of homeless animals at the League's shelters. Santa will be on hand on Saturdays and Sundays December 8 and 9, and December 15 and 16. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, and 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, and the price is $4.99 per photo, to be donated to the League.

A STICKY PREDICAMENT!

League agents responding to a call for help from North Reading this fall, found this group of young squirrels bonded together by pine pitch and forced to move around as one unit. The squirrels were brought to the League, where they were anesthetized and separated, and later released in their home area.

FAREWELL TO A ZOO

The Walter D. Stone Memorial Zoo officially closed its doors on November 12 after massive state budget cuts wiped out funding for the 85-year-old facility in Stoneham. A majority of the zoo's 450 animals, primarily the small mammals, hooved animals and birds, have been transferred to the Franklin Park Zoo in Boston, which is also operated by the state's Metroparks Zoo division, while many of the larger animals are being relocated to other zoos around the country. A bill is currently before the state legislature that would allow the zoos to be operated by a semi-private authority that would solicit private financial support for the zoos and eliminate dependence on the tax dollar.

CHRISTMAS DINNER FOR HORSES

Plan to visit Faneuil Hall, Thursday, December 13, at 11 a.m. to see the League's Santa deliver carrots, Blue Seal horse feed, and new blankets to Boston, State and MDC Police horses. Similar treats will be delivered that day by League agents to working horses in stables throughout the area as part of the League's traditional Christmas Dinner for Horses, an annual event since 1913.

DOG DETECTIVES GET HIGH ON THE JOB

New guidelines have been published to help veterinarians treat drug overdoses in dogs, an occupational health hazard seen increasingly among dogs used to sniff out illegal drugs, according to a recent Reuters news report. The dogs become overly excited when they make a drug find, and sometimes wolf down quantities of marijuana, cocaine or other narcotics before their handlers can stop them.

Dogs At Work!

A good friend, a faithful companion or a member of the family. This is what many people think of when they think of our relationship with dogs. Are all dogs pets only? Have you ever really thought about how helpful dogs can be? Did you know that many dogs, besides being happy pets, are trained to do work for people? In fact people first began using dogs as hunters and protectors before keeping them as pets. Although animals are still used for these purposes today, we also consider them to be good helpers and faithful *companions*.

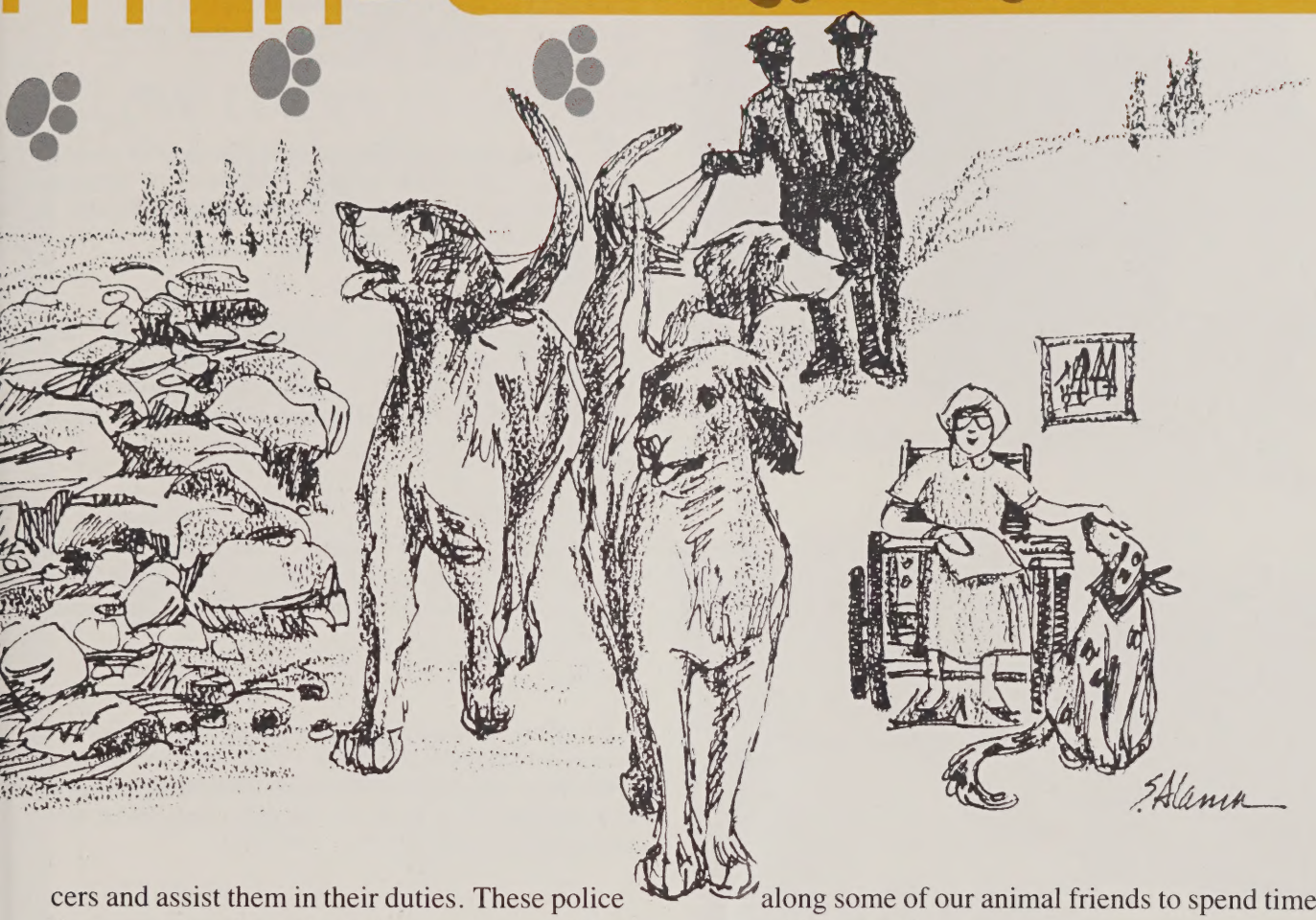
Dogs perform a variety of jobs for us. Guide dogs are trained to work for people who are blind. With a dog at their side, a blind person can go anyplace without worrying about traffic or other obstacles. It is the guide dog's job to protect them from such danger.

Dogs have also been trained to assist people who are deaf. These "hearing dogs" are specially trained to recognize important sounds and alert their deaf owner about these sounds. Some of the sounds that they are trained to recognize include: alarm clocks, a baby crying, a doorbell or knock at a door, or a smoke alarm. Recently, dogs are even being trained to help people who are paralyzed and confined to wheelchairs (or bed). These service dogs are trained to assist their owners by retrieving things they need, picking up objects that have been dropped, open doors, push elevator buttons and even pull wheelchairs.

The military and police departments have had great success with dogs trained to "sniff out" bombs, dangerous materials and drugs. Due to their sharp sense of smell, dogs are very good at locating things that people cannot find. Dogs are often used to find missing people. They are able to track the scent of a person several days after he or she has been in a particular place! These dogs have also been very useful in locating survivors that have been buried in rubble after earthquakes or cave-ins.

The police also use dogs as K-9 officers. These dogs serve as partners to human police offi-

FRIENDS



cers and assist them in their duties. These police dogs are trained to protect their partners, sniff out people hiding in dark buildings or alleys, and to chase and catch suspects who try to run away from the police officer.

Another job performed by dogs, especially collies and related *breeds*, is herding cattle or sheep. The dog runs around the edge of the *herd*, barking and snapping at the animal's ankles to move the herd in the desired direction.

Dogs, and other pets, give us affection and companionship. **They are true friends!** It is because of these qualities that many of us enjoy sharing our lives with pets. It is also because of these qualities that dogs, and other pets, are used as *pet therapists*. These animals are often brought into hospitals, nursing homes and senior citizen apartments to visit the patients and residents. These visits help to cheer up the residents and patients who often are lonely or sick and unable to have pets. The Animal Rescue League of Boston often visits nursing homes and hospitals, bringing along some of our animal friends to spend time with the residents and patients.

Animals do so much for us! It is important for us to remember to take good care of such good friends and hard workers!!!

VOCABULARY WORDS

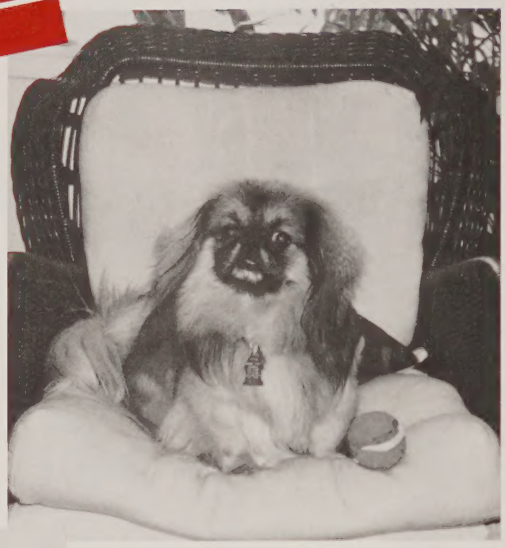
Pet Therapist – an animal that is used to help make sick or lonely people feel better.

Breeds – a group of animals that look alike and have the same type of ancestors. Poodles are a particular breed of dog.

Companion – person or animal who often goes along with another, or who often shares in what another is doing.

Herd – a group of animals of one kind kept together.

PETS IN THE PICTURE



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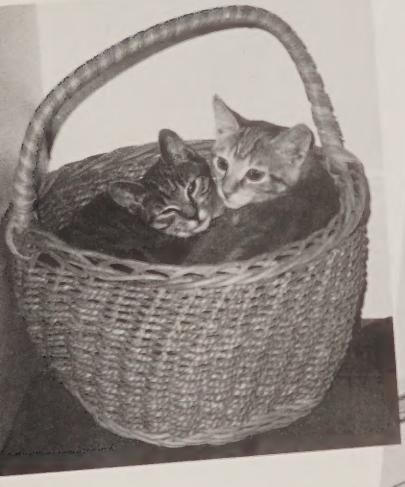

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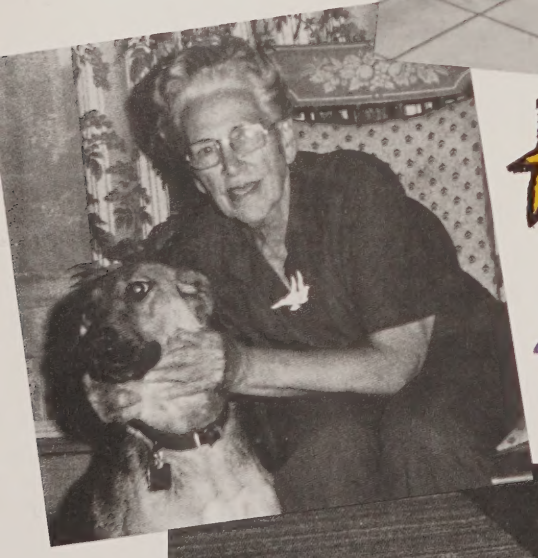

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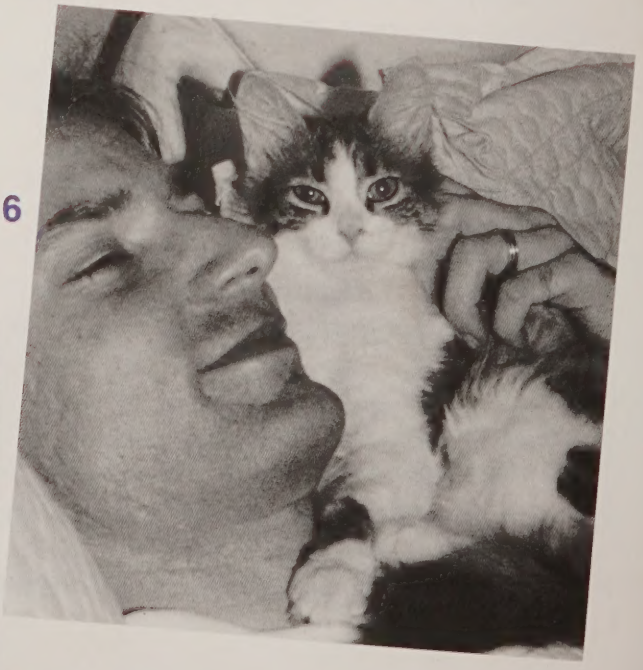

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1 Here's "Puki," a Pekingese adopted last June by Marc LaCasse of Boston who writes that, except for a few "minor disciplinary problems such as (sometimes) chewing the furniture, Puki is a wonderful dog!"

2 "'Hector' and 'Sonia' are great cats and well loved by our family," according to Anne Vandervail of Cohasset. "Although not littermates, they get along well together as you can see from this photo."

3 "Steve Grady," a mixed lab/shepherd pup is "very calm, obedient and loves our other dog, a golden retriever," writes owner Brian Grady of South Yarmouth, who adopted Steve last June. "This is our second dog from an animal shelter, and we wouldn't go any other way!"

4 Charlotte Hallissy of Melrose writes "Tasha's middle name is 'Love,' and she has taken over our home and hearts. Hope you can use this photo — she would not sit for a picture without me!"

5 "I'm so glad we got two at the same time," says Tricia Rogers of Kingston who adopted "Pearl and Licorice" (l to r) last May. "My husband and I have great fun playing with them, and they have great fun with each other. This is them enjoying the woodstove."

6 Rob and Laurie Thomas of Boston describe their new pet "Margalo Thomas" as "a very smart kitten . . . very beautiful, bad, and lovable. She fearlessly attacks invisible objects, scratches furniture (in a very cute way), and is obsessed with jumping into the refrigerator."

Love comes in all colors and sizes...

...at the Animal Rescue League of Boston.

Give the gift of love to someone special this year...a present that won't be too big or too small, too dull or too daring, and will never have to be exchanged after the holidays. With a pet adoption gift certificate from the Animal Rescue League of Boston, they can pick out the pet of their choice—a gift that will bring enjoyment for many years to come—at any of the League's four conveniently-located adoption shelters.

A gift certificate for a puppy or kitten, older dog or cat, hamster, gerbil, or even a rabbit can be ordered by telephone, and charged to your credit card.

Animal Rescue League of Boston 10 Chandler St. • (617) 426-9170

Branches: **Dedham** (617) 326-0729 **Salem** (508) 744-7910 **E. Brewster** (508) 255-1030

A non-profit humane society helping animals since 1899.

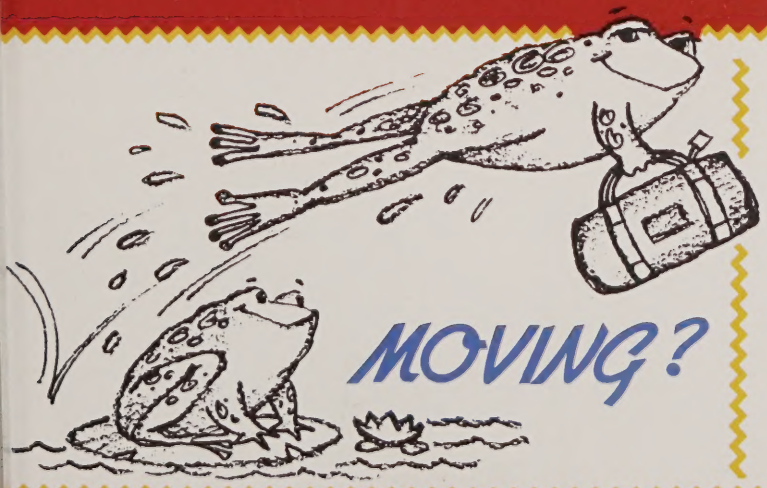
The League continues to rely on the generosity of its friends to meet the ever-expanding needs of our animal population. The cruel realism of inflation makes the League's task in providing needed services more difficult than ever, but with continued support, the challenge can and will be met.

In making a bequest to the League in your Will, please remember that the corporate title of our society is **"Animal Rescue League of Boston,"** that it was incorporated in 1899, and has no connection with any other similar society.

Form of Bequest

I give to the Animal Rescue League of Boston the sum of _____ dollars.

Animal Rescue League of Boston
10 Chandler Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116



MOVING?

Please let us know if you're planning to move so we can be sure that you receive **OUR FOURFOOTED FRIENDS** without interruption.

Old Address:

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

(please print or attach mailing label)

New Address:

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please allow two months for us to correct our mailing list.

Good will to animals!

Season's Greetings
from all of your friends at the
Animal Rescue League of Boston

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Animal Rescue League of Boston
P.O. Box 265, Boston, Massachusetts 02117